

<b>POSITION DESCRIPTION</b> <i>(Please Read Instructions on the Back)</i>										1. Agency Position No. <b>F167</b>											
2. Reason for Submission <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Redescription <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Reestablishment <input type="checkbox"/> Other		3. Service <input type="checkbox"/> Hdqtrs. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field		4. Employing Office Location		5. Duty Station		6. OPM Certification No.													
Explanation <i>(Show any Positions replaced)</i> Replaces F161 Helitack Squad Leader, GS-455/462-05 and F162 Helitack Crew Leader, GS-455/462-06.				7. Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nonexempt		8. Financial Statements Required <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Personnel Financial Disclosure <input type="checkbox"/> Employment and Financial Interests		9. Subject to IA Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No													
				10. Position Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Excepted <i>(Specify in Remarks)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> SES (Gen.) <input type="checkbox"/> SES (CR)		11. Position Is: <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisory <input type="checkbox"/> Managerial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neither		12. Sensitivity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1-Non-Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/> 3-Critical Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Noncritical Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/> 4-Special Sensitive		13. Competitive Level Code											
				14. Agency Use		15. Classified/Graded by		Official Title of Position		Pay Plan		Occupational Code		Grade		Initials		Date			
a. U.S. Office of Personnel Management		b. Department, Agency or Establishment		c. Second Level Review		d. First Level Review		e. Recommended by Supervisor or Initiating Office		16. Organizational Title of Position <i>(if different from official title)</i> <b>Fire Helicopter Squad Leader</b>		17. Name of Employee <i>(if vacant, specify)</i>		18. Department, Agency, or Establishment <b>Department of the Interior</b>		c. Third Subdivision					
a. First Subdivision <b>Bureau of Land Management</b>		b. Second Subdivision <b>State Office</b>		19. Employee Review-This is an accurate description of the major duties and responsibilities of my position.		Signature of Employee <i>(optional)</i>		20. Supervisory Certification. <i>I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position and its organizational relationships, and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds, and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statutes or their implementing regulations.</i>		a. Typed Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor		b. Typed Name and Title of Higher-Level Supervisor or Manager <i>(optional)</i>		21. Classification/Job Grading Certification. <i>I certify that this position has been classified/graded as required by Title 5, U.S. Code, in conformance with standards published by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or, if no published standards apply directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.</i>		22. Position Classification Standards Used in Classifying/Grading Position <b>GEG for Aid and Technical Work in the Biological Sciences.</b> <b>GS-400, Dec 91, TS-111. Range Technician Series, GS-455, Dec 91, TS-111. (Continued in item 24, Remarks, below)</b>					
Signature		Date		Signature		Date		23. Position Review		Initials		Date		Initials		Date		Initials		Date	
a. Employee <i>(optional)</i>		b. Supervisor		c. Classifier		24. Remarks Item # 22 continued: Forestry Technician Series, GS-462, Dec 91, TS-111. Part 1 of the General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide, Jun 98.		25. Description of Major Duties and Responsibilities <i>(See Attached)</i>		Previous Edition Usable		OF 8 (Rev. 1-85) U.S. Office of Personnel Management FPM Chapter 295		Signature		Date					

### **Introduction**

The incumbent serves as a squad leader on an exclusive use contracted helicopter suppression squad within a BLM Field Office Fire and Aviation Management organization. Serves as a working leader of 3 or more squad members. These squads are part of a rapidly deployed helicopter squad for initial attack wildland fires, support large fires, support fire use and other resource projects.

The primary line of work of this position is fire suppression; prior wildland firefighting and helicopter experience is required.

### **Major Duties (60% or more of the time)**

Performs and leads three or more squad members in initial attack and extended **attack** wildland suppression operations which includes direct/indirect fireline construction, hotspotting, backfiring/burnout, water delivery systems and application, tree and brush felling and removal, blackline and mop-up operations, gridding and patrol. Distributes and controls work assignments among employees; assures timely accomplishment of assigned tasks; maintains work notes and records; makes reports on work accomplishments; ensures that the work is carried out safely; reports on performance problems and issues.

Instructs squad members in specific tasks and techniques and conducts on-the-job training. Trains by demonstrating skills in use of hand and power tools, hoses, chemicals, and hydraulic systems. Observes, corrects, and evaluates squad skills. Explains fire behavior characteristics, safety regulations, and work procedures.

Instructs and directs technicians in wildfire fighting and fire program support operations. Makes work assignments; schedules personnel; provides instructions or training; monitors work in progress; insures equipment and materials are available; resolves problems encountered; and reports to the supervisor about the work, personnel, and problems encountered.

May be required to supervise the squad in the absence of the supervisor.

Performs the loading/unloading of helicopters with firefighting personnel and equipment. Ensures that load manifests and load calculations are accurate to meet helicopter weight limitations and safety guidelines. Gives oral briefings to pilots, passengers and other personnel outlining general mission parameters/conditions and safety considerations. Prepares external helicopter loads, water buckets, and rigging; performs ground and hover hook-ups to the helicopter.

Constructs helicopter landing areas from natural openings and vegetation to **required** safety specifications. When serving as Helispot Manager, provides wind indicators, fire extinguishers, landing area markers, fueling areas, helicopter marshalling, personnel

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and cargo organization, pilot and passenger briefings. Communicates with pilots through radio and/or hand signals.

May serve as aerial observer in the helicopter providing fire detection, fire locating, fire size-up, directing ground forces to the fire, ordering additional resources and communicating with fire dispatch on mission status.

Serves as Type 4 and 5 Incident Commander during initial attack of wildland fires. Analyzes fire behavior, determines fire cause, determines suppression tactics, directs squad members, communicates with dispatch, completes fire reports. May serve in other fireline and helicopter management positions per qualifications.

Inventories, services and maintains firefighting tools and equipment, support vehicles and helicopter support equipment. Monitors and records pilot flight and duty time, aircraft flight time, fuel truck activity, squad member time, etc.

May be certified as helicopter rappeller, rappel spotter, helitorch module member, Plastic Sphere Dispenser operator and other specialty positions per qualifications.

May serve as an instructor for a variety of fire and aviation related training courses at the local, regional and inter-agency levels.

**Additional Duties (40% or less of the time)**

May research fire literature and provide applicable information for fire management programs. Implements fire effects monitoring system by establishing and monitoring index plots in a variety of fuel/vegetation types, and training others to do the same. Enters and trains others in entry of data into computer analysis programs.

Assists resource professionals in field survey efforts such as archeology, vegetation surveys, resource inventories and data analysis.

Assists in identification of grasses, herbs, shrubs, and trees. Assists in preparing herbarium specimens and records habitat and plant association data.

Uses computer models to store, update, and analyze fire behavior and other monitoring data.

May assist in emergency operations as trained and qualified.

May perform hazard fuel reduction projects, which entail thinning and cutting vegetation through use of mechanical means, e.g., chainsaw, etc.

May perform project work and lead other workers in the same type of work which may include, cleaning outdoor recreational facilities; mowing grass and trimming shrubs; and performing trail maintenance and building maintenance duties, etc.

**Other Significant Facts:**

This is a testing designated position (TDP) under the Department of the Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.

Incumbent is subject to medical examination and must pass the work capacity test for arduous positions.

**FACTORS**

1. Knowledge Required by the Position (Level 1-4, 550 points)

Knowledge of strategies, tactics, and suppression methods used in containment and control of wildfires and wildland fires in order to relay assignments to squad members, accurately evaluate rapidly changing fire circumstances, determine when/if additional forces may be needed, or determine when circumstances warrant withdrawal of the squad to safe location.

Knowledge of fire behavior including causes of fire, influence of temperature, humidity, wind, topography, slope and fuel moisture conditions, and fuels in order to know where to attack the fire, build fire line and where to be positioned to manage a wildland fire.

Detailed knowledge of the methods and procedures associated with wildland fire suppression and management to resolve a full range of irregular or problem situations when suppressing wildland fires. Certification as a Type IV Incident Commander is required.

Knowledge of Bureau and Departmental policy, procedures and guidelines concerning helicopter operations, helicopter accessories and equipment, helicopter capabilities and limitations. Specific knowledge of the policy and procedures contained in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG).

Knowledge of air operations, rappelling, helicopter capabilities and limitations, helicopter contracts, load balance and capacity, load calculating, and manifesting of personnel and equipment to effectively conduct helicopter suppression and resource missions. Knowledge of work procedures and practices in working with helicopters and aircraft. Ability to use helicopter accessory equipment such as helitorch, Premo Mark III plastic sphere dispensers, rappelling equipment, medivac equipment, long line/remote hooks, and infrared detection equipment used in wildland fire management, prescribed burns and other resource management projects.

Knowledge of tactical methods and techniques for use of water and additives in controlling and mopping-up fires in order to efficiently and effectively accomplish operations where water is in short supply.

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Skill in the use of hand tools such as pulaski, shovel, and McLeod; and power tools including chainsaw and portable pumps to build fireline and control wildland fire and to perform other non-fire related duties engaged in firefighting or preparation for such assignments.

Knowledge of fire terminology to communicate with other squad members.

Knowledge of fire behavior at the S-290/390 (Intermediate Fire Behavior/Fire Behavior Calculations) level. Knowledge of fire behavior prediction methods. Knowledge of wildland fire management planning, strategies, and tactics. Helibase Manager training (S-271) and Aerial Ignition Equipment Techniques training appropriate to area.

Ability to lead a fire suppression squad and to provide on-the-job training in proper and safe techniques, applications, methods, procedures and principles. This ability is used to effectively deal with the wide variety of conditions and situations encountered during wildfire suppression actions, prescribed burning, and project work.

Knowledge of general range/forestry technician work in order to personally perform and lead others in the performance of a variety of work in such areas as hazard tree removal, hazard fuel reduction, prescribed burning, recreation, wildlife and watershed, as well as the facility of vehicle, and equipment maintenance and upkeep.

Knowledge of appropriate act requirements to include the Equal Opportunity Act, Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, 29 CFR 1604.11(a) Sexual Harassment sufficient to function within a diverse workforce.

Ability to perform duties under stressful and adverse operating conditions, such as long work hours, heavy workloads, emergency situations, adverse working and environmental conditions.

Knowledge of agency and interagency qualification, position task book requirements, and certification standards and procedures adopted by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.

Knowledge and skill of standard first aid procedures sufficient to perform preliminary first aid and triage as necessary.

Knowledge of the structure and function of the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and the United States Forest Service sufficient to determine how they interact on an interagency basis.

Knowledge of related fields such as forestry, range, wildlife, botany, soils and water, cultural and historical resources in order to make informed fire operational decisions.

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Oral and written communication skills sufficient to effectively interact with people at all levels, internal and external to the organization, including the public.

Ability to perform basic computer technology skills such as word processing, electronic mail, internet use, and specialized fire information databases and programs.

Knowledge of the organization and the function of cooperative interagency fire organizations such as NWCG, NICC, GACC, state and local governments to facilitate fire operations in a multi-jurisdictional setting.

2. Supervisory Controls

(Level 2-3, 275 points)

The supervisor initially provides direction on the priorities, objectives, and/or deadline for types of work covered by precedent. New or unusual assignments may be accompanied with a general background discussion, including advice on the location of reference material to use.

The technician identifies the work to be done to fulfill project requirements and objectives, plans and carries out the procedural and technical steps required, seeks assistance as needed, and independently coordinates work efforts with outside parties.

The incumbent exercises initiative in developing his/her own solution to common technical and procedural problems such as changes in priorities, need for extended field time, minor need for additional equipment or personnel, and other such comparable issues. The technician seeks administrative direction or decision from higher authority on the course to follow when encountering significant technical or procedural problems with the work, e.g., when project objectives appear to substantially exceed available equipment and staffing capacities or when technical issues new to the organization are encountered. In such instances the technician may be expected to develop proposals for resolving the problem.

Technical review of the incumbent's work during fire assignments is provided by a variety of supervisory personnel from the fires to which the incumbent's squad has been assigned.

3. Guidelines

(Level 3-2, 125 points)

Most guidelines are in the form of oral instructions and training prior to actual fire suppression activities. General guidelines can be found in the annually published BLM Standards for Fire Operations and the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide which provides detailed procedural guidance to supplement training already received. Only in complex or unique situations does the incumbent seek other written material or the supervisor's expertise.

Some guidelines are also contained in the, prescribed burning and hazard fuel reduction plan, emergency medical services plan, safety plan, the Fireline Handbook,

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Health and Safety Handbook, and other specific local guides pertinent to the local unit or specific to the type of work being performed.

Since every possible situation cannot be anticipated and covered in training, the employee must exercise independent judgment in selecting the appropriate methods, techniques, and procedures, especially in situations where the supervisor is not available for consultation. Guides such as safety regulations must be applied.

4. Complexity

(Level 4-2, 75 points)

The work involves performing a variety of fire management tasks and leading the work of other employees in fire management activities. The technician must consider personnel capabilities, priorities, weather, terrain, heavy fuel loads, multiple fires, extreme burning conditions, guidelines, and established procedures to determine the appropriate action. Must make frequent critical decisions under time pressures and emergency conditions concerning fire suppression methods and squad safety when choices are limited, and conditions are hazardous.

Initial attack fire operations and local helicopter projects range from routine/simple to unprecedented/complex.

Assignments involving multiple aircraft, large helibases and complex helicopter projects may offer a challenge where routine methods and procedures are inadequate

5. Scope and Effect

(Level 5-2, 75 points)

The work performed by the incumbent and assigned squad members contributes to the effectiveness of the firefighting organization, efficiency of helicopter projects, protection of resource values-and overall attainment of Bureau and other agency goals. Decisions made during helicopter and fireline operations affect the safety and welfare of squad members, and the management and protection of valuable natural resources, government facilities, life and private property from destruction by natural or human caused incidents other fire resources and the public throughout various geographical locations.

6&7. Personal and Purpose of Contacts

(Level 2/A, 45 points)

Primary contacts are with the squad/crew and others in the fire organization. Frequently has contact with comparable Federal, State, and local government agency personnel. Other contacts include visitors, private landowners, local residents and contracted pilots. When assigned to large helibase operations, works with a wide spectrum of pilots, drivers and mechanics.

Contacts are made to exchange information, gather and clarify information, distribute and balance workload among squad members, resolve problems and answer technical questions, and report to supervisor on performance, progress, and training needs of

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squad members. Provides orientation, training, leadership, and coordination for the accomplishment of fire suppression activities with fire agencies.

8. Physical Demands

(Level 8-3, 50 points)

Arduous: Duties involve fieldwork requiring above average physical performance, endurance and superior conditioning. Work requires prolonged standing, walking over uneven ground, and recurring bending, reaching, lifting and carrying of items weighing over 50 pounds and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar strenuous activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity.

Duties include demands for strenuous activities in emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended periods of time. Operation of some specialized fire equipment can place extended physical stress on incumbent during fire activities.

Incumbent is subject to medical examination and must pass the work capacity test for arduous positions.

9. Work Environment

(Level 9-3, 50 points)

The work is primarily performed outdoors at remote locations, airstrips, helibases, unimproved helispots, fireline locations in forest and desert environments in steep terrain, sometimes at high elevation, where surfaces may be extremely uneven, rocky, or covered by vegetation. Temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees F and fall below freezing. Risks include smoke inhalation, fire entrapment, snake or insect bites and stings, exposure to excessive machinery noise, and falling and rolling material. Personnel must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Incumbent is subject to frequent exposure to low-level flight, low flying and hovering aircraft. Incumbent may be required to live in backcountry camps for extended periods of time. The hazardous nature of the job requires that protective clothing be worn (hard hat, gloves, boots, flame resistant clothing and other personal protective equipment). Work requires travel by light fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft.



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### EVALUATION STATEMENT

<u>Recommended Classification</u>	Lead Range/Forestry Technician (Fire), GS-455/462-06
<u>Organizational Location:</u>	Bureau of Land Management
<u>References:</u>	Range Technician Series, GS-455 Dec 91 TS-111 Forestry Technician Series, GS-462 Dec 91 TS-111 Grade Evaluation Guide for Aid and Technician Work in the Biological Sciences, GS-400 Dec 91 TS-111 Part I General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide Jun 98

Background: This is a standard position description for a Lead Range/Forestry Technician and is appropriate for positions that serve as a squad leader, leading a minimum of three other squad members. The primary purpose of the position is to lead a squad performing helitack wildland firefighting work.

Determination of Series and Title: The Range/Forestry Technician, GS-455/462 series (TS-111, 12/91) covers positions that primarily require a practical knowledge of the methods and techniques of range/forestry and other biologically based resource management fields. Range/Forestry technicians provide practical technical support in the scientific management, protection, and development of rangeland and forest resources. Range/Forestry Technicians are most commonly found in first level units and are principally concerned with performing work supporting the implementation of projects and program goals.

The GS-0081, Fire Protection and Prevention Series (TS-108, 9/91), states that positions that include fire control, suppression, and related duties incident to range/forestry management work should be classified to the Range/Forestry Technician Series. OPM has previously determined that firefighter positions are to be classified in the GS-455 or GS-462 series dependent upon the primary vegetation on the unit. Since the only difference in the positions is the primary vegetation, the positions are considered interchangeable with either classification being appropriate. The prefix "Lead" is added to the title to reflect the responsibilities of leading three or more crewmembers in accomplishing range/forestry technician duties. Therefore, the proper title and series are **Lead Range Technician (Fire), GS-455** or **Lead Forestry Technician (Fire), GS-462** dependent upon type of terrain and vegetation. An organizational title of **Fire Helicopter Squad Leader** has been requested and is approved for use.

Because this position requires skill in firefighting, the parenthetical title of (Fire) is appropriate and is in line with agency practice.

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Determination of Grade:

As defined by the General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide, leader positions are classified one grade above the highest level of nonsupervisory work led. This position leads 3 or more range/forestry technicians. The grade of the leader duties is classified at the GS-6 or GS-5 level depending on the highest grade level led. If the highest level led is GS-5 then the grade of the work leader is GS-06. If the highest level led is GS-4 then the grade of the work leader is GS-05. In any case, the technical duties (non work leader assignments) establishes the grade at the GS-6 level.

The range/forestry technician duties are evaluated by the Grade Level Guide for Aid and Technical Work in the Biological Sciences, GS-400, (TS- I 11, 12/91), which is in the FES format and provided below.

# FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM POINTS RATINGS

Evaluation Factors	Points	Level	Comments
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	550	1-4	This position requires knowledge and techniques of range/forestry and fire management. This includes fire behavior, fire organizations, fire equipment, fire line construction and thorough knowledge of helicopter operations, policies, equipment and practices.
2. Supervisory Controls	275	2-3	This position requires knowledge of air operations, rappelling, helicopter capabilities and limitations, helicopter contracts, load balance and capacity, load calculating, and manifesting of personnel and accessory equipment, such as helicopter, Premo Mark III plastic sphere dispensers, rappelling equipment, medivac equipment, long line/remote hooks, and infrared detection equipment used in wildland fire management, prescribed burns and other resource management projects.
3. Guidelines	125	3-2	The technician must exercise on-site judgment and determine the best course of action from among a limited variety and number of established operations procedures. Assignments require knowledge and skill in the recognition of conditions subject to rapid change.
4. Complexity	75	4-2	Supervisor provides overall objectives and resources available. The employee is responsible for independently planning, organizing, and accomplishing the assigned programs of work. Completed work is reviewed for general adequacy and effectiveness in meeting expected results. There is considerable operational independence.
5. Scope and Effect	75	5-2	Incumbent must choose the most appropriate from several guidelines. Not every situation in a fire can be anticipated and covered in training, so the employee must use judgment in applying guidelines, especially in situations where the Supervisor is not available for consultation.
6. Personal Contacts	45	2A	The incumbent works under the most adverse conditions of climate, fuels and terrain. Decisions as to what must be done depend on the employee's analysis of the situation and issues involved with the selected course of action chosen from many operations. Level 4-2 assignments consist of performing a variety of routine procedural tasks. Performance of the assignments requires making choices when executing a number of tasks.
7. Purpose of Contacts			Work involves the execution of specific procedures, and techniques, which differ with each fire's fuel type, weather conditions, and topography. The incumbent leads a helicopter squad engaged in mostly initial attack on wildland fires. The effect of the work is to minimize the loss due to wildland fires. The incumbent's performance contributes to the overall effectiveness of the fire suppression effort and affects the accuracy, reliability, or acceptability of the fire management program.
8. Physical Demands	50	8-3	Contacts are with the squad, pilots, and other members of wildland fire management suppression resources. Contacts are made to gather, exchange and clarify information, distribute and balance workload, report to supervisor on performance, progress, and training needs of crewmembers, resolve problems and answer technical questions about wildland fire suppression activities and needs. Contacts may also be required to coordinate these needs with other land managing agencies.
9. Work Environment	50	9-3	This is a rigorous field position. The work requires regular and recurring protracted period of considerable and strenuous physical exertion. Work primarily performed outdoors in steep terrain and extremely uneven, rocky surfaces where protective clothing must be worn. s subject to frequent exposure to low-level flight, low flying and

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Evaluation Factors	Points	Level	Comments
Total Points	1245		hovering aircraft. Encounters risks that require safety precautions.
Grade Conversion	GS-06	Range: 1105-1350	

Conclusion: The proper title and series are **Lead Range Technician (Fire)**, GS-455-06 or **Lead Forestry Technician (Fire)**, GS-462-06 dependent upon type of terrain and vegetation. The position has an organizational title of **Fire Helicopter Squad Leader**.

Mark W. Whitesell  
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